

FOR NATURE
AGAINST ART

The Holocene Gazette & Country Traveller

ANTHOLOGY TOWARD
A RADICAL ECOLOGY

THE HOLOCENE GAZETTE & COUNTRY TRAVELLER #1 IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF CHARLES OLSON, OF GLOUCESTER, POET, TEACHER,
& PROMETHEAN WARRIOR OF THE NEW MAN. DECEMBER 27, 1910 TO JANUARY 10, 1970.

WHAT WE FINALLY SEEK TO DO IS TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT WHICH WORKS SO WELL WE CAN RUN WILD IN IT

THE WILDNESS PROJECT EARTH FREE TERRITORY

(The following statement was originally entitled 'Four Changes' and published as an anonymous work in progress by some California ecologists. We have rewritten the original and here propose another, if complementary, vision towards a VERMONT FREE TERRITORY.)

I. POPULATION

THE CONDITION

Position: Man is but a part of the fabric of life — dependent on the whole fabric for his very existence. As the most highly developed tool-using animal, he must recognize that the unknown evolutionary destinies of other life forms are to be respected, and act as gentle steward of the earth's community of being.

Situation: There are now too many human beings, and the problem is growing rapidly worse. It is potentially disastrous not only for the human race but for most other life forms.

Goal: The goal would be half of the present world population or less.

ACTION

Social/Political: Begin a massive effort to convince the people of the world that the problem is severe. And all that talk about raising food production — well intentioned as it is — simply puts off the only real solution: reduce population. Demand legalization of abortion and make it free. Free distribution and application of all birth control information and methods. Take a vigorous stand against the policies of all institutions that exercise an irresponsible social force in regard to this question; oppose and correct simple-minded boosterism that equates population growth with continuing prosperity. Work ceaselessly to have all political questions seen in the light of this prime problem. Oppose, on the other hand, all coercive government programs! Insist that all solutions be voluntaristic at the level of the immediate community in context of the local ecology.

The community: Explore other social structures and marriage forms, such as group marriage and polyandrous marriage, which provide family life but may produce less children. Share the pleasure of raising children widely, so that all need not directly reproduce to enter into this basic human experience. We must hope that no one woman would give birth to more than one child, during this period of crisis. Adopt children. Let reverence for life and reverence for the feminine mean also a reverence for other species, and future human lives, most of which are threatened.

Our own heads: "I am a child of all life, and all living beings are my brothers and sisters, my children and grandchildren. And there is a child within me waiting to be brought to birth, the baby of a new and wiser self." Love, love-making, a man and a woman together, seen as the vehicle of mutual realization, where the creation of new selves and a new world of being is as important as reproducing our kind.

II. POLLUTION

THE CONDITION

Position: Pollution is of two types. One sort results from an excess of some fairly ordinary substance — smoke, or solid waste — which cannot be absorbed or transmuted rapidly enough to offset its introduction into the environment, thus causing changes the great cycle is not prepared for. (All organisms have wastes and by-products, and these are indeed part of the total biosphere; energy is passed along the line and refracted in various ways, "the rainbow body." This is cycling, not pollution.) The other sort is powerful modern chemicals and poisons, products of recent technology, which the biosphere is totally unprepared for. Such is DDT and similar chlorinated hydrocarbons — nuclear testing fallout and nuclear waste — poison gas, germ and virus storage and leakage by the military; and chemicals which are put into food, whose long-range effects on human beings have not been properly tested.

Situation: The human race in the last century has allowed its production and scattering of wastes, by-products, and various chemicals to become excessive. Pollution is directly harming life on the planet: which is to say, ruining the environment for all life.

We are fouling our air and water, and living in noise and filth that no "animal" would tolerate, while advertising and politicians try and tell us we've never had it so good. The dependence of the modern governments on this kind of untruth leads to shameful mind-pollution: mass media and most school education.

Goal: Clean air, clean clear-running rivers, the presence of Pelican and Osprey and Gray Whale in our lives; salmon and trout in our stream; clear language and good dreams.

Our own heads: Part of the trouble with talking about DDT is that the use of it is not just a practical device, it's almost an established religion. There is something in Western culture that wants to totally wipe out creepy-crawlies, and feels repugnance for toadstools and snakes. This is fear of one's own deepest nature inner-self wilderness areas, and the answer is, relax. Relax around bugs, snakes, and your own hairy dreams. Again, farmers can and should share their crops with a certain percentage of bug life as "paying their dues." Thoreau says: "How then can the harvest fail? Shall I not rejoice also at the abundance of the weeds whose seeds are the granary of the birds? It matters little comparatively whether the fields fill the farmer's barns. The true husbandman will cease from anxiety, as the squirrels manifest no concern whether the woods will bear chestnuts this year or not, and finish his labor with every day, relinquish all claim to the produce of his fields, and sacrificing in his mind not only his first but his last fruits also." In the realm of thought, inner experience, consciousness, as in the outward realm of interconnection, there is a difference between balanced cycle, and the excess which cannot be handled. When the balance is right, the mind recycles from highest illuminations to the stillness of dreamless sleep; the alchemical "transmutation."



ACTION

Social/Political: Ban DDT and related poisons immediately. Expose those scientists, the pesticide industry, and the agri-business who are trying to block this demand. Demand the immediate cessation of all pollution by industry — "Pollution is somebody's profit." Phase out the internal combustion engine and fossil fuel use in general — more research into non-polluting energy sources; solar energy; the tides. Tell the truth about atomic waste disposal: it's impossible to do it safely. Stop all germ and chemical warfare research and experimentation; work toward a hopefully safe disposal of the present staggering and stupid stockpiles of H-Bombs, cobalt gunk, germ and poison tanks and cans. End the wasteful use of paper, etc. which adds to the solid waste of cities — develop methods of recycling solid urban waste. Recycling should be the basic principle behind all waste-disposal thinking. Thus, all bottles should be reusable; old cans should make more cans; old newspapers back into newsprint again. Many of the commercial foods are now poisoned by chemical additives — Demand organic foods! A shift toward a more varied and sensitive type of agriculture (more small scale and subsistence farming) would eliminate much of the call for blanket use of pesticides.

The community: DDT and such; don't use them. Air pollution: use less cars. Cars pollute the air, and one or two people riding lonely in a huge car is an insult to intelligence and the Earth. Share rides, legalize hitch-hiking, and build hitch-hiker waiting stations along the highways. Soon we must do away with highways and cars altogether. Maybe some new combination of horses and monorails. Also — a step toward the new world — walk more; look for the best routes through beautiful countryside for long-distance walking trips. Learn how to recycle all your wastes. Solid waste: boycott bulky wasteful Sunday papers which use up trees. It's all just advertising anyway, which is artificially inducing more mindless consumption. Refuse paper bags at the store. Don't work in any industry which pollutes, and don't be drafted into the military. Don't waste. Carry your own jug to the winery and have it filled from the barrel.



I think I could turn, and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained,
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things,
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,
Not one respectable or unhappy over the whole earth.

—Walt Whitman—

III. CONSUMPTION

THE CONDITION

Position: Everything that lives eats food, and is food in turn. This complicated animal, man, rests on a vast and delicate pyramid of energy-transformations. To grossly use more than you need, to destroy, is biologically unsound. Most of the production and consumption of modern societies is not necessary or conducive to spiritual and cultural growth, let alone survival; and is behind much greed and envy, age-old causes of social and international discord.

Situation: Man's careless use of "resources" and his total dependence on certain substances such as fossil fuels (which are being exhausted, slowly but certainly) are having harmful effects on all the other members of the life-network. The complexity of modern technology renders whole populations vulnerable to the deadly consequences of the loss of any one key resource. Instead of independence we have over-dependence on life-giving substances such as water, which we squander. Many species of animals and birds have become extinct in the service of fashion fads — or fertilizer — or industrial oil — the soil is being used up; in fact mankind has become a locust-like blight on the planet that will leave a bare cupboard for its own children — all the while in a kind of Addict's Dream of affluence, comfort, eternal progress — using his science to destroy the planet in exchange for consumer junk he doesn't need.

Goal: Balance, harmony, humility, growth which is a mutual growth with Redwood and Quail (would you want your child to grow up without ever hearing a wild bird?) — to be a good member of the great community of living creatures. True affluence is not needing anything.

ACTION

Social/Political: It must be demonstrated ceaselessly that a continually "growing economy" is not only unhealthy, but a cancer. And that the criminal waste which is allowed in the name of competition — especially that ultimate in wasteful needless competition, hot wars and cold wars between any and all of the modern bureaucratic and hierarchical nation-states — must be halted totally with ferocious energy and decision. Economics must be seen as a small sub-branch of ecology, and production/distribution/consumption handled by small communities of people with the same elegance and sparseness one sees in nature. Open space; phase out logging in most areas. Protection for all wildlife in a biologically sound environment! No zoos or Nazi-type experimentation on their bodies in the name of science. Damn the International Whaling Commission which is selling out the last of our precious, wise whales! Absolutely no further development of roads and concessions in National Parks and Wilderness areas; let the whole of the planet grow wild again. End the consumer society and get rid of the unnecessary products. Radical

Co-ops. Blast the myths of progress and all crude notions of conquering or controlling nature.

The community: Sharing and creating. The inherent aptness of communal life — where large tools are owned jointly and used efficiently. Recycling clothes and equipment. Support handicrafts, gardening, home skills, midwifery, herbs — all the things that can make us independent, beautiful and whole. Learn to break the habit of unnecessary possessions — a monkey on everybody's back — but avoid a self-abnegating anti-joyous self-righteousness. Simplicity is light, carefree, neat and loving — not a self-punishing ascetic trip. Don't shoot a deer if you don't know how to use all the meat and preserve that which you can't eat, to tan the hide and use the leather — to use it all, with gratitude, right down to the sinew and hooves. Simplicity and mindfulness in diet is a starting point for many people.

Our own heads: It is hard to even begin to gauge how much a complication of possessions, the notions of "my and mine" stand between us and a true, clear, liberated way of seeing the world. To live lightly on earth, to be aware and alive, to be free of egotism, to be in contact with plants and animals, starts with simple concrete acts. The inner principle is the insight that we are interdependent energy-fields of great potential wisdom and compassion — expressed in each person as a superb mind, a handsome and complex body, and the almost magical capacity of language. To these potentials and capacities, "owning things" can add nothing of authenticity.

IV. TRANSFORMATION

THE CONDITION

Position: Everyone is the result of four forces: the conditions of this known-universe (matter/energy forms and ceaseless change); the biology of his species; his individual genetic heritage and the culture he's born into. Within this web of forces there are certain spaces and loops which allow total freedom and illumination. The gradual exploration of some of these spaces is "evolution" and, for human cultures, what "history" could be. We have it within our deepest powers not only to change our "selves" but to change our culture. If man is to remain on earth he must transform the six-millennia-long urbanizing civilization tradition into a new ecologically-sensitive harmony-oriented wild-minded scientific/spiritual culture. "Wildness is the state of complete awareness. That's why we need it."

Situation: Civilization is a manifestation of the city, what we begin to understand as ecological catastrophe. We are learning that civilized life isn't good for the human gene pool. Hence we must change the very foundation of our society and our minds.

Goal: We seek an epical and total transformation as a minimum project. What we envision is a planet on which the human population lives harmoniously with itself and all the other life forms by employing a decentralized and miniaturized eco-technology coupled with a rebirth of the tribal primitive-unitary society and the both of them integrated into the wild environment. An Earth Free Territory. Specific points in this vision:

- A healthy and sparse population of all races, much less than in number today.
- Cultural and individual pluralism, unified by common dedication to the organic environment. No need for any central governments.
- A technology of communication, education, and quiet transportation, land use being sensitive to the properties of each region. Allowing, thus, the Bison to return to much of the high plains. Careful but intensive agriculture in the great alluvial valleys; deserts and forests left wild for those who roam them.
- A basic cultural outlook and social organization that can and will liberate the human imagination, one that inhibits power and property seeking while encouraging exploration and challenge in things like music, meditation, mathematics, mountaineering, magic, and all other authentic *being-in-the-world*. Women totally free and equal. A new kind of family — responsible, but more festive and relaxed — is implicit.

ACTION

Social/Political: Work for the dissolution of all centralized social and technological consolidations into their organic and ecological elements. Dissolve the city and the nation-state. We must dismantle and dissolve, by any means necessary, the whole of hierarchical centralized government and corporate industry. In the process we must liberate science in the service of a wild planet and develop a new miniaturized eco-technology for what small tool production we will desire. Remember we are involved in a revolution of consciousness as well as a total and uncompromising social transformation. Seek to seize the key images, myths, archetypes, eschatologies, and ecstasies. Realize life isn't worth living unless one's on the transforming energies' side.

The community: Walking in the woods and cleaning up the streets. Find psychological techniques for creating an awareness of self which includes the social and natural environment. "Consideration of what specific language forms — symbolic systems — and social institutions constitute obstacles to ecological awareness." Let no one be ignorant of the facts of biology and related disciplines; bring up our children as part of the wild-life. Some communities can establish themselves in back country and rural areas and flourish — others maintain themselves in urban centers, and the two types work together — a two-way flow of experience, people, and home-grown vegetables. Ultimately cities need not exist at all. Investigating new life-styles is our work, as is the exploration of Ways to explore our inner realms. Master the archaic and the primitive as models of basic nature-related cultures — as well as the most imaginative extensions of science — and build a community where these two vectors cross. Politics, in its old sense, has nothing to do with human community. Insist that all solutions to our crisis be situated at the level of the self and the immediate community on a co-operative basis with other selves and communities. Any and all government solutions, conversely, will only make matters worse. What we must keep in mind is that the government-corporate-military axis is the major polluter and corrupter of our natural environment. Although each of us will have to change ourselves to achieve the transformation, still, we will not solve the problem until we get rid of the major ecologically destructive constructs. Therefore refuse to support or participate in any government sponsored projects, candidates, or mandates with the exception of those which grant more personal freedom. Don't be afraid to tell the armies, the governments, the corporations, and the courts to do the planet a favor and disappear.

Our own heads: The sensuous conquest of the present is where it starts. Knowing that we have a good deal of man's previous experience and culture available to our study, and the possibility of being free enough of the weight of traditional cultures to seek out a larger identity. The first members of a civilized society since the early neolithic to wish to look clearly into the eyes of the wild and see our self-hood, our family there. We have these advantages to set off the obvious disadvantages of being as repressed and submissive as we are — which gives a fair chance to overcome our mis-education and penetrate some of the riddles of ourselves and the universe. We may now propose an entirely new vision for ourselves. We may think of mankind as that part of the planet and organic evolution which wishes to be conscious of itself. It is like given to us to be the eyes and mind of cosmic adventure. We look upon the other plants and animals as our brother and sister hands, fur, feet, ears, and myriad voices. We are becoming whole again. And now, what we finally seek to do is to create, or more precisely *recreate*, an environment which works so well we can run wild in it.



The Times are Exceedingly Alter'd, Yea the Times have turn'd every thing upside down, or rather we have Chang'd the good Times, Chiefly by the help of the White People, for in Times past, our ForeFathers lived in Peace, Love and great Harmony, and had every-thing in Great plenty. When they wanted meat they would just run into the Bush a little ways with their Weapons and would soon bring home good Venison, Raccoon, Bear, and Fowl. If they choose to have Fish, they wo'd only go to the River or along the Sea Shore and . . . presently fill their Cannoons With Variety of Fish, Both Scaled and shell Fish, and they had abundance of Nuts, Wild Fruit, Ground Nuts, and Ground Beans, and they planted but little corn and Beans and they kept no Cattle or Horses for they need-ed none - And they had not Contention about their lands, it lay in Common to them all, and they had but one large dish and they Cou'd all eat together in Peace and Love - But alas, it is not so now, all our Fishing, Hunting and Fowling is entirely gone . . .

—From a petition presented to the State of Connecticut by the Mohegan Indians, May 14, 1789

The Unanimous Declaration
of Interdependence

When in the course of evolution it becomes necessary for one species to denounce the notion of independence from all the rest, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the interdependent station to which the natural laws of the cosmos have placed them, a decent respect for the opinions of all mankind requires that they should declare the conditions which impel them to assert their interdependence.

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all species have evolved with equal and unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to insure these rights, nature has instituted certain principles for the sustenance of all species, deriving these principles from the capabilities of the planet's life-support system. That whenever any behavior by members of one species becomes destructive of these principles, it is the function of other members of that species to alter or abolish such irrelevant behavior and to reestablish the theme of interdependence with all life, in such a form and in accordance with those natural principles that will effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that cultural values long established should not be altered for light and transient causes, that mankind is more disposed to suffer from asserting a vain notion of independence than to right themselves by abolishing that culture to which they are now accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations of these principles of interdependence, evinces a subtle design to reduce them, through absolute despoliation of the planet's fertility, to a state of ill will, bad health, and great anxiety, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such notions of independence from other species and from the life-support system and to provide new guards for the reestablishment of security, and maintenance of these principles. Such has been the quiet and patient suffering of all species, and such is now the necessity which constrains the species homo sapiens to reassert the principles of interdependence. The history of the present notion of independence is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations all having in direct effect the establishment of an absolute tyranny over life. To prove this let facts be submitted to a candid world.

- People have fouled the waters that all life drinks of and they have fouled the air that all life partakes of.
- People have transformed the face of the earth to enhance their notion of independence from it and in so doing have interrupted many natural processes that they are dependent upon.
- People have contaminated the common household with substances that are foreign to the life processes which are causing many organisms great difficulties.
- People have massacred and extincted fellow species for their feathers and fur, for their skins and tusks.
- People have persecuted most persistently those known as coyote, lion, wolf, and fox because of their dramatic role in the expression of interdependence.
- People have warred upon one another which has brought great sorrow to themselves and vast destruction to the homes and the food supplies of many living things.
- People have denied others the right to live to completion their interdependencies to the full extent of their capabilities.
- People are proliferating in such an irresponsible manner as to threaten the survival of all species.
- People have refused to recognize that they are interacting with other species in an evolutionary process.

We therefore, among the mortal representatives of the eternal process of life and evolutionary principles, in mutual humbleness, explicitly stated, appealing to the ecological consciousness of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do solemnly publish and declare that all species are interdependent, that they are all free to realize these relationships to the full extent of their capabilities; that each species is subservient to the requirements of the natural processes that sustain all life. And for the support of this declaration with a firm reliance on all other members of our species who understand their consciousness as a capability, to assist all of us and our brothers to interact in order to realize a life process that manifests its maximum potential of diversity, vitality and planetary fertility to ensure the continuity of life on earth.

On the Planet, Earth,
August, 1969

As befits a doomed and wicked city, the Gomorrah of the yellow-jackets—social wasps which nest underground—is a preempted cavern once burrowed-out by the mammals of the forest floor. The honeycombs of the shrews and mice are often only temporary thoroughfares for nesting or finding food, to be bulldozed out by the next highway builder passing through. But short stretches of these thoroughfares do achieve a certain permanence by serving well the nest-building activities of the yellowjacket societies. These yellow-jacket nests are crude affairs, completely unlike the masterpieces of engineering of the honeybees, or those of other hornets which nest above ground. The yellowjacket *Vespula* is not a builder, she is a remodeler.

The *Vespula* queen, bright in her black and gold, courses low over the landscape in early spring, investigating rodent tunnels, dismissing each in turn because of some hidden flaw. Finally she lights on one and inspects it more thoroughly; she flies off to search some more, but always she returns to compare the new finds with this one. None better seems available, so she makes her choice.

The queen first digs a chamber for herself. In and out of the hole she flies, directly to a woodpile or log, where she scrapes off splinters and fibers and kneads them into building mortar with her jaws. The yellowjacket queen begins her house with the ceiling first. It is a large canopy, propped by the construction of pillars and arches. She rolls pebbles and stones out of her way, or cements them to the sides of the nest; she excavates where necessary and seals off the tunnels formerly used by the shrew. When the land is cleared and excavated, she adds her next story, a ceiling below the first ceiling.

Throughout the history of the nest, the yellowjackets carry out a rebuilding operation that would appall a human contractor. As ceiling combs grow old, they are discarded, much as if an architect kept shutting off old rooms in a house and adding new wings. Additions to the *Vespula* nest are always made below, but if a rock should interfere, they will also expand to the sides. Little planning or structural beauty can be seen in the nests, but they are sturdy jobs. The array of ceilings are well-propped by flying buttresses and inverted arches.

On the first ceiling that she constructed, the queen builds several small cups—upside down, like everything else in this city—and lays (or rather pastes, since they would otherwise fall out) her eggs. The eggs hatch in about eight days, and now she is not only founding a city but also feeding a brood. Adult yellowjackets sip nectar, but the larvae need red meat; she must not only carry back pulpwood but also game. Fortunately, unlike most wasps, the yellowjacket young are not very particular about the kinds of insects they are fed. Once the first brood has matured, the queen turns over to them the entire job of managing the city. She devotes her energies solely to egg-laying.

Now the city grows quickly, in a few months enlarging to perhaps twice the size of a man's head. In all, some queens may produce about 25,000 short-lived offspring, of which more than 5000 can be found in the nest at any one time, although the average numbers are usually considerably less. The original scrapings in the rodent nest have grown to a teeming city, with whole ceilings razed, rooms rearranged, new wings added. The city hums with industry, and

To the tune of "America the Beautiful"

Oh cancerous for smoggy skies,
For pesticides grain—
Irradiated mountains rise
Above an asphalt plain.
America, America, thy birds have fled from thee;
Thy fish lie dead by poisoned streams,
From sea to fetid sea.
Oh plundered of their guardian woods,
Where silver brooklets flowed,
Their gullies clogged with cast-off goods,
Thy barren hills erode.
America, America, no sunshine comes to thee,
But bakes they barren topsoil dry,
No wind but blows it free.
Relentless as thy bankers' greed,
That for each westward tie,
A gandy dancer's corpse decreed,
Beside the tracks must lie.
America, America, thy sins prepare thy doom;
Monoxide cloud shall be thy shroud;
Thy cities be thy tomb.

—Louise Crowley, Seattle Group

REVOLUTIONARY LETTERS NO. 16

we are eating up the planet, the New York Times takes a forest, every Sunday, Los Angeles draws its water from the Sacramento Valley the rivers of British Columbia are ours on lease for 99 years, there are no more clams in Puget Sound

every large factory is an infringement of our god-given right to light & air to clean and flowing rivers stocked with fish to the very possibility of life for our children's children, we will have to look carefully, i.e., do we really want/need electricity and at what cost in natural resources human resource do we need cars, when petroleum pumped from the earth poisons the land around for 100 years, pumped from the car poisons the hard-pressed cities, or try this statistic, the USA has 5% of the world's people uses over 50% of the world's goods, our garbage holds matter for survival for uncounted "underdeveloped" nations

City of the Yellowjackets

into its coffers is brought pillage from the surrounding countryside. Throughout the forest, insects venture abroad to be swooped upon and mutilated by the daughters of *Vespula*. So prosperous does the city become that by the end of August it can afford to send out colonizers, lords and ladies beautifully clad in shining coats that have never been splattered with the mud of artisan labor. They are the future queens, and kings for the moment of impregnation only, ready to be launched into the world to found new dominions.

With their departure, the queen loses all energy. Her production lessens markedly, and she sluggishly moves to the cups to insert her egg-laying tool. Soon she finds a corner to lie in, gasping from the exertion. The days of her empire are now numbered. Occasionally, the workers fight among themselves, some breaking into the larval cells and devouring the young. A madness begins to eat away at the very foundations of the city.

More and more workers take to devouring the larvae; but still unsated, they abuse, then torture, the young. An orgy has begun that will end only with the death of the city. No longer do the workers set out on expeditions of pillage, but like a mercenary army without discipline, they rush through the combs looting and destroying. The queen is assassinated, and every worker becomes a queen. It is democracy in its most horrible form. So well do the assassins do their jobs that but few remain, the fluttering of their wings reverberating through the empty halls.

The walls of the city have been breached, and in slinks the silent army of destroyers. Mites overrun the combs, and millipedes and woodlice chew down the pulp walls. The silverfish, the spider, the earwig enter, and even the rodent returns to reclaim his nest. The last of the yellowjackets are quickly killed off by the invaders, or die simply of hunger, too listless to seek the fall flowers for their sweet nectar. The walls of the city crumble, and it is no more. The only survivors are the few mated queens, sent off in the days of the city's prosperity, who seek out warm places to hibernate until the next spring. They remain innocent of the carnage until the following year, when they too will be victims of the assassins.

The destruction of the yellowjacket city marks the end of the living year in the forest soil. One by one, the dwellers of the forest prepare for the winter cold. The trees have already shut down their waterworks; only a few brown leaves still hang from oaks like wilted banners after a parade. The leaves are heaped in drab monotony on the forest floor, a task of decomposition awaiting the fungi in the spring. The earthworms have burrowed deep, and the mole now makes his borings at greater depth. Some organisms, like many insects, have cast their eggs into the soil, and the species is represented on the planet only in that stage. As the temperature grows colder, a quiet settles upon the soil, and nothing remains of the throbbing life of summer but the deer mouse on his endless rounds, searching for forgotten seeds.

But the lifelessness of the winter soil is an illusion. For were we to dig down under the snow and into the hard, frozen earth we should come upon the hope of the next season: the roots, ready to put out new growth; a frozen mite awaiting the thaw; the spores of countless numbers of microbes. All will arise again from the soil in a magic promise of spring that has never been broken since life began.

—Peter Farb in *Living Earth*—

Klamath Indians hauling logs
Bulldozer through narrow valleys
up the draw & over
the summit
All for the White Man's pay money
The Veho brings cholera
The Wasichu sells syphilis
whisky & TB
In twenty years there is nothing
The ocean rages unheard
The last deer starves
houses crumble
& a man cracks the bones
of his child

THAT THE GODS MAY HEAR ME AS I SPEAK
THAT SHIVA DIONYSIUS
& OLD NICK
WOULD COME TO JOIN THIS CHANT

O sons of men
build temples without roads
lie naked
beneath winds
for the sea that washes
the flesh off your face
will bless you
again & again & again

—Grant Fisher

REVOLUTIONARY LETTER #38

NOT PEOPLE'S PARK
PEOPLE'S PLANET, CAN THEY
FENCE THAT ONE IN, BULLDOZE IT
4 A.M.?

—Diane Di Prima



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EARTH FREE TERRITORY #1

We will discuss the developing ecological and social crisis. There is a possibility that we will experience a breakdown of the biological support systems from which the world would not readily recover. This must be seen as the likely possibility if some immediate and successful efforts are not made toward disassembly of the politico-industrial-military apparatus including its ecologically disruptive transportation, power, and agricultural systems. It is predictable and assumed, in any case, that there will be some major disasters of both natural and social kind in the urban centers of civilization and in their domesticated countryside. We take it the chances of meaningful prevention have long foreclosed, however, if the catastrophe to explode on the cultural landscape is to be contained it will be the result of energetic, imaginative, and rational transformation activity in the transitional period. Our interests are threefold: (1) to join with the various militant environmental defense groups attempting to protect as many species and wild areas as possible, as well as seeking to restore areas already under development; (2) to liberate the space necessary to the emerging cultural adaptations if they are to live and grow — "creating the new society within the shell of the old"; (3) to develop and demonstrate those libertarian forms of organization, e.g., the affinity group, which correspond to the primitive-unitary vision. We emphasize that the wildness project is the introductory and pragmatic alternative to an accelerating process of ecological collapse. Survival now rivals liberation as the utopian gesture.

We recognize that as the crisis unfolds the cloak of history which disguises the social lie will be torn away and the contraries will emerge. The wildness project, for its part, is the anti-thesis to civilization. (In some senses we lack a coherent definition of civilization. It is now important that we amend any ideological analysis with a geomorphological one. The technique links up perfectly with Reich's theory of repression, which he was able to push back 6000 years, i.e., in the preface to *Mass Psychology of Fascism*. For our purposes here we refer to Carl O. Sauer's remarks in *Man's Role in Changing the Face of the Earth*. "The rise of civilizations has been accomplished and sustained by the development of powerful and elaborately organized states with a drive to territorial expansion, by commerce in bulk and to distant parts, by monetary economy, and by the growth of cities." The evidence now demonstrates that these parts taken separately or together are inherently disruptive of the biological, morphological, and spiritual unities. There are, of course, any number of valuable cultural expressions which we experience daily. Civilization is responsible for the humiliation and alienation of these experiences but should not otherwise be associated with them. For example, language, poetry, science, tools, meaningful work, love, etc.)

The wildness project is dedicated to the regeneration of the primitive-unitary type cultural adaptations, to natural history, and to the wild and cosmic ecology. The project stands opposed to all centralized, and therefore hierarchical, national or international solutions. It should go without saying that any constructs of this kind could and would only postpone the crisis and/or further entangle man in an endless web of oppression. Our metaphor is, simply, the re-integration of man with nature. "Suso . . . describes how on a bright Sunday as he was sitting lost in meditation, an incorporeal image appeared to his spirit. Suso addresses the image: 'Whence have you come?' The image answers: 'I come from nowhere.' — 'Tell me, what are you?' — 'I am not.' — 'What do you wish?' — 'I wish not.' — 'This is a miracle! Tell me, what is your name?' — 'I am called Nameless Wilderness.' — 'Where does your insight lead?' — 'Into untrammelled freedom.' — 'Tell me, what do you call untrammelled freedom?' — 'When a man lives according to all his caprices without distinguishing between God and himself and without looking before or after . . .'

To those who naively predict a golden age of the machine we would urge a more comprehensive review of the general problems of mechanization and especially of the mechanical manipulation of organic matter. (The introductory outlines of this study have been proposed in *Gedion's Mechanization Takes Command*.) Furthermore, we believe that those who ignorantly talk of the fusion of organic and inorganic matter are in fact talking about a world of machines, not men, though we admit it is a dangerous and possible future. Pound, as a young man, in his translation of the *Natural History of Love* announced that: "In his growing subservience to, and adoration of, and entanglement in machines, in utility, man rounds the circle almost into insect life, the absence of flesh; and may have need even of horned gods to save him, or at least a form of thought which makes them possible." Gary Snyder in his *Earth House Hold* elaborates this theme for us in two 'Dharma Queries': "1. Nature and Man — the great Paleolithic Goddess and the antler'd dancer — magic paintings in caves; red hands; red dots." And "6. Contemporary science: the knowledge that society and any given cultural outlook is arbitrary; and that the more we conquer Nature the weaker we get. The objective eye of science, striving to see Nature plain, must finally look at 'subject' and 'object' and the very Eye that looks. We discover that all of us carry within us caves: With animals and gods on the walls; a place of ritual and magic. (In other contexts, Max Rapheal in his essay on prehistoric cave paintings points out that: "The paleolithic artists understood that the forms of all surfaces and space have magical and biological origins, something the Greeks made us forget.")

Ultimately, there may be some liberty aspects to the eco-technology which has been proposed. (See *Ecology & Revolutionary Thought* by Murray Bookchin.) In truth the natural landscape is in such unhealthy condition and we moving out of the industrial civilization so over-specialized that we would simply not be able to survive without being able to produce or scavenge some minimum of steel tools. (For some interesting insights into this problem see *War of the Iroquois* by G. T. Hunt.) What is terminal is that we make the dismantling of the industrial-technology the apriori condition of any eco-technology.

The wildness project will encounter some hostile political phenomena. In the first stages, which we are now into, the politico-industrial-military axis will absurdly address the crisis with some superficial but expensive programs designed to postpone catastrophe. This is the old 'money can buy immortality' scheme. These programs will be complete and predictable failures. As this becomes increasingly obvious the more elitist technocratic elements will opt for an international and totalitarian solution in the name of 'survival'. Be careful! This will be attempted by co-optation of the ecological transformation movement which in some places the technocracy has itself initiated and in others infiltrated. You will know them by their centralized forms of organization and proposed centralized solutions even though they may be willing to support struggle against the crude industrial state. In other words, now that the techniques have been developed for the elimination of most labor through cybernation (machines that run machines) and for control of the subjective and objective biological realities (e.g., the recent developments in genetic and hormonal manipulation which the 'discoverers' themselves have vehemently warned us about) we can expect an attempt to reorder, synthesize, and consolidate the civilization. For instance, note the hideous ease with which Time (Feb. 2, 1970) can suggest: "Ideally, the entire environment should be subjected to computer analysis and systems control." (Italics ours.)

Whether or not we can explain the evolution of the parasitic and authoritarian civilization in terms of cultural maladaptation (penis-as-weapon or degenerate alchemy) or whether it may have extra-terrestrial (sky-god) origins is academic. What is important is that we are willing to admit that its 'history' is a wholly degenerate and accelerating process, and that we seek more comprehensive definitions.

Our most important work on the practical level is to make ourselves as independent as possible from the crumbling industrial state(s). The catalytic elements of any Earth Free Territory should have the informations, and tools of defense and survival at their disposal in the country and back country communities. We also suggest the development of 'mobile' affinity groupings who can propose the alternative in the urban areas and use the country communities as physical and spiritual 'tenders'. (The old wobbly 'hobos' were an early example of what can be done.)

Finally, the whole question of 'survival' must be kept squarely in the context of liberation. The ecological crisis is essentially the result of civilization; the domestication and colonization of everyday life; the separation of man from his imagination and his own deepest resources which included ecological awareness in the first instance. Survival, then, does not lie in more control and in the final humiliation of the instincts, but in the liberation of the body and the imagination; in the recreation of the wild environment where the beautiful and sensuous essence of man, the world, and all the cosmos is yet to be discovered.

The new man is emerging. He is everywhere and anonymous. In the cities he is a catalyst of human liberation and the primitive-unitary revolutionary vision; in the country he is a liberator of space for his ecologically sound culture; and in the back country he is a militant defender of rocks, waters, air, grasses, trees, and animals: the catalyst of his own re-unification with nature. And in his anonymity he is unknowable except, in the night, when a terrible genius illuminates his face and, like Bene's deer, "all lost wild america is burning in his eyes —"



* The "holocene" is the current or "recent" geological epoch. It follows the "pliestocene" & began approximately 10,000 years ago. It coincides with the earliest agricultural adaptations.